



**Board of
Directors**

Officers

Chair
Todd Shell
Houston

Vice Chair
Ben King
Houston

Secretary
Taylor Cook
Austin

Treasurer
Natalie Hicks
Austin

Members

Paul Charles
Houston

Melissa Escamilla
McAllen

Tamara Foster
Houston

Benjamin Jules
Houston

Daniel Kuehn
Austin

Ben Nakhaima
Austin

Nathan Psik
Austin

Jo Schaeffer
Austin

Heather Slay
Austin

President & CEO

Eric Samuels

Testimony in support of:

House Bill 1278: Relating to public hearings on homelessness issues held by the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless.

Submitted by:

Texas Homeless Network
Eric Samuels
3000 South IH-35; Suite 100
Austin, TX 78704

Chairman Cortez, and members of the Committee,

I wish to register our support for House Bill 1278. There are over 27,000 people experiencing homelessness in TX each night, and many reside in Texas' rural, small, and mid-sized communities. Outside of Texas' major metropolitan centers, communities are fighting homelessness every day, some such as Abilene, Lubbock, Tyler, and Waco, to name a few having much success in that fight.

During Texas Homeless Network's Annual Conference on Ending Homelessness, we enjoy the opportunity to host one of the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless quarterly meetings. That conference is annually held either in Austin or Houston. However, it does afford people from across the state a chance to attend as they participate in our conference. Still, if the council members found it feasible, we would encourage the opportunity for one of the quarterly meetings to be held in a community outside of Texas' major metropolitan centers. It would serve as a learning opportunity for the council members. It would expand the opportunity for advocates, service providers, the faith community, and people experiencing homelessness to interact with council members in their community, encouraging more participation.

Sincerely,

Eric Samuels
President/CEO
Texas Homeless Network